

Document 1

Summary of 303d Category 5 Listings from the Department of Ecology

(Local waters)

	Flushing Channel	Vancouver Lake	Lake River	Burnt Creek Bridge	Salmon Creek
Temperature	X	X	X	X	X
PCBs <i>*found in some fish. Not found in lake core samples.</i> <i>Department of Ecology 1/2014 Publication No. 14-03-101</i> <i>Determined PCB's were coming from street run off via Burnt Creek Bridge</i>		X	X		
Turbidity		X	X		X
Bacteria in Water		X	X		X
Total Phosphorus		X			
Dissolved Oxygen				X	X
PH				X	
Dieldrin		X	X		
Toxaphene				X	
Other Toxins		X	X	X	

November 2019

Lara Henderson, Water Quality
TMDL Program Planner
Department of Ecology, Headquarters
(360) 407-7656
lara.henderson@ecy.wa.gov

Dear Lara,

I write on behalf of the Friends of Vancouver Lake, a Clark County, Washington non-profit advocacy group to respectfully request that the Department of Ecology elevate Vancouver Lake and its tributaries to a high priority in the state's current TMDL process.

Despite its long status as a 303(d) Category 5 water body (since 2004), Vancouver Lake's issues have not yet gained the notice they deserve. Unlike many watersheds in Washington, the Lake lacks a strong surrounding residential ownership to spearhead any call to action. It appears to us that the Lake has not been elevated for high priority in state funding due to multiple public entities with ownership interests in the Lake but no single, clear advocate. Adding the Lake as a top priority for TMDL would provide a necessary lever for holding stakeholders accountable.

Therefore, Friends of Vancouver Lake are formally submitting to the Department of Ecology a request to have Vancouver Lake receive a written TMDL's in this upcoming selection cycle.

The Lake's 2,300 acre surface and groundwater resources are a critical component for the entire lower Columbia River region supporting over 200,000 migratory waterfowl and hosting a variety of salmonids, including lower Columbia chum, Chinook, and steelhead. In addition, members of the community enjoy numerous recreational opportunities at the lake: competitive rowing, sailing, and paddling, as well as swimming, hiking, fishing, and birdwatching. Vancouver Lake Regional Park is a 190-acre park that stretches along 2.5 miles of the west shore of the lake and includes a popular sandy beach. All of these activities are severely limited as a result of the Category 5 issues including intermittent closures due to toxic blue-green algae blooms.

Friends of Vancouver Lake formed in late 2018 to address the alarming increase of Eurasian Milfoil Weed in the Lake and immediately set to work raising \$200,000+ from the community, gaining the support of local citizens, city, county and Port elected officials and securing a permit from DOE to treat the milfoil. Although our efforts began with the mission to treat milfoil, we are committed to addressing issues with the Flushing Channel, and Lake River as these bodies of water are also impaired and are interconnected in the watershed. We are happy to report to you that our community's commitment to Vancouver Lake is stronger than ever.

Here are FoVL's responses to the specific Department of Ecology criteria for TMDL prioritization:

1. **Severity of the pollution problem** – the Lake falls into Category 5 on temperature, PCBs, turbidity, bacteria in the water, total phosphorous, Deldrin and other toxins. Conjoined water bodies such as Lake River, Burnt Bridge Creek and Salmon Creek add to the Lake's woes with their own Category 5 issues. (*See Document 1, attached*)
2. **Risks to public health** – each season the Lake and this community miss out on the opportunity to host thousands of competitive athletes and visitors to our Lake - the largest lake within a 50-mile radius of a major West Coast city and international airport (Portland) – via world, national, west coast, regional, and state competitive rowing competitions, dragon boating competitions, sailing regattas and outrigger canoe events due to blue-green algae blooms and E.coli issues. The same conditions affect swim beaches and community recreational uses such as sailing, kayaking, and paddle boarding. Risks to health from cyanobacteria are well established. We are working closely with Clark County Public Health to understand testing and noticing protocols while advocating for needed changes to support the lake's year-round use.
3. **Risks to threatened and endangered species** – The Lake temperature, toxicity and shallow depth threaten salmonids, lower Columbia chum, Chinook and steelhead. We are working with the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to understand opportunities and threats to the Lake's inhabitants.
4. **Vulnerability of water bodies to degradation** – As temperature, toxicity, flow and dilution issues remain unaddressed and have multiplied, the Lake faces a new foe – Eurasian Milfoil Weed taking hold throughout the shallow waters threatening swimmers and recreation. Failure to address the need for increased flow of colder Columbia River water through the existing Flushing Channel – a waterway with only one Category 5 designation for temperature – warrants an updated hydrological study.
5. **Local support and interest in a watershed** – For more than 40 years, the Vancouver and Clark County communities have understood the enormous possibilities that Vancouver Lake represents for outdoor recreation, economic development and the important personal well-being that results from time spent recreating with family and friends in the beautiful outdoors.

Vancouver Lake Regional Park represents a major local resource for recreational shoreline opportunities that remains accessible to those with limited resources or using public transportation.

There is recent renewed interest in taking advantage of the Lake's potential for public access and use. Clark County has been acquiring land along the shore through its Legacy Land program and has started to build a series of trails looping around the lake as part of the Lewis & Clark Regional Trail project (*See Document 2, attached*). This is a major investment that underscores the belief that Vancouver Lake and surrounding watersheds

are a major attraction for future public use. In addition, the new Vancouver Waterfront project is nearly complete and includes the Grant Street Pier, renowned restaurants, and a 7-acre waterfront park in addition to residential, retail and office space.

Strong support for this TMDL prioritization request comes from local citizens, local governmental agencies, our state representatives from the 49th legislative district, and private organizations. (*See Document 3, attached.*)

We ask that the Department of Ecology include Vancouver Lake for a written TMDL in the upcoming selection cycle.

Thank you,

Larry Cassidy
Co-Chair
Friends of Vancouver Lake
360-798-1249

Kathy Gillespie
Co-Chair
Friends of Vancouver Lake
360-901-6538



WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

November 19, 2019

Lara Henderson, Water Quality
TMDL Program Planner
Department of Ecology, Headquarters

Dear Ms. Henderson:

As legislators from Southwest Washington, we write to urge the Department of Ecology to elevate Vancouver Lake and its tributaries to a high priority in the current TDML process.

Vancouver Lake was designated a 303(d) Category 5 water body in 2004. We understand that to mean that the Lake is among those bodies of water in Washington that have the worst water quality. The water quality problems in the Lake, however, long predate the 2004 designation and the Lake has had numerous studies conducted on its water quality going back to the 1960's. It appears that Vancouver Lake has not been elevated for high priority in State funding due to multiple public entities with ownership interests in the Lake but without a clear advocate. It is our understanding that the Department of Natural Resources is the owner of the lakebed and surface waters and exercises regulatory authority over water related uses on the Lake. The Port of Vancouver acknowledges ownership of tidelands around the Lake but apparently cannot, at this time, delineate the specific location of those tidelands. Clark County operates a large regional park on the west side of the Lake which includes a major recreational swimming beach.

The Lake provides a myriad of recreational amenities to the citizens of our community including swimming, sailing, kayaking and competitive rowing. The rowing events attract thousands of local participants and visitors each year. Annual regattas, dragon boat races and similar events are very popular and contribute to the area's economy.

At 2300 acres, Vancouver Lake is one of the largest bodies of water in this part of the State. In addition, it is a refuge for migratory waterfowl and has identified salmonids including chum, chinook and steelhead as part of the fish population. The Lake provides a significant environmental amenity not only for this community but for all Southwest Washington.

All the above-named recreational amenities are threatened by the degraded water quality. The persistent outbreaks of blue-green algae have cancelled major rowing events every year in recent memory. 2019 had one of the earliest algae outbreaks resulting in periodic closures of the Lake not only for rowing and watersports but also for recreational swimming during the summer months. To compound the problem, Eurasian Milfoil was identified in the Lake in 2017 and has grown exponentially since then not only threatening all recreational activities but posing dangerous conditions for swimmers and those engaging in watersports.

Our delegation recently met with a local nonprofit, Friends of Vancouver Lake, that was formed in 2018 primarily to combat the milfoil invasion. Their efforts resulted in significant community support to deal with the milfoil threat, but they also recognize that the long-term water quality issues are at the heart of the invasive weed problem and the persistent blue green algae threat.

We fully support and encourage the efforts to elevate Vancouver Lake and its tributaries on the State's priority list for both a formal TDML study and appropriate funding for a water improvement plan and we ask the Department of Ecology to recognize that this long neglected water body deserves much needed State support.

Sincerely,



Senator Annette Cleveland



Senator Ann Rivers



Rep. Sharon Wylie



Rep. Paul Harris



Rep. Monica Stonier



Rep. Larry Hoff

C: Hon. Gov. Jay Inslee
Maia Bellon, Director, Department of Ecology
Clark County Council
Shawn Hennessee, Clark County Manager
Kevin Tyler, Clark County Lands Manager
Port of Vancouver Commissioners
Juliana Marler, Executive Director, Port of Vancouver
Mayor Ann McEnery-Ogle, City of Vancouver
Vancouver City Council
Eric Holmes, City Manager

LEWIS AND CLARK REGIONAL TRAIL

VANCOUVER LAKE SEGMENT

RIDGEFIELD
USFWS REFUGE

COLUMBIA RIVER

LEWIS AND CLARK
REGIONAL TRAIL

FELIDA NEIGHBORHOOD

SALMON CREEK TRAIL

NW 122 STREET

NEIGHBORHOOD
CONNECTIONS

SHILLAPOO WILDLIFE
RECREATION AREA

VANCOUVER LAKE
REGIONAL PARK

LAKESHORE NEIGHBORHOOD

FRENCHMAN'S BAR
REGIONAL PARK

VANCOUVER LAKE
ROWING CLUB

VANCOUVER LAKE

VANCOUVER LAKE
SAILING CLUB

PUBLIC BOAT
LAUNCH

BURNT BRIDGE CREEK
GREENWAY

STATE OF OREGON

BNSF RAILROAD

WILLAMETTE RIVER

THE PORT OF VANCOUVER

COLUMBIA RIVER

4TH PLAIN BOULEVARD






4TH PLAIN BOULEVARD





DOWN TOWN VANCOUVER





FORT VANCOUVER
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

HAYDEN ISLAND
STATE OF OREGON






LEGEND

-  PRIMARY ROUTE
-  SECONDARY TRAIL ROUTE
-  EXISTING TRAIL SEGMENTS
-  ALTERNATIVE TRAIL ROUTE
-  PROPOSED CONNECTOR TRAILS

-  EXISTING TRAILS
-  WATER TRAILS
-  PROPOSED TRAILS
-  RAILROAD

-  TRAILHEAD
-  PROPOSED BRIDGE
-  PARKING
-  RESTROOMS

LAND MANAGERS

-  FEDERAL LAND
-  WASHINGTON STATE LAND
-  CLARK COUNTY LAND
-  CITY PARKS
-  SCHOOLS